

IN THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-28 (canceled)

29. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor associated with the fluid conduit to detect air in the fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and provide at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said conduit at a sampling time within the respective interval;

~~means for receiving the output signals and for calculating therefrom an air concentration value and for triggering remedial action when the air concentration value exceeds a predetermined value, comprising:~~

a memory adapted to store an ~~for storing the~~ air concentration value;

a processor adapted to receive the sensor output signal and ~~which,~~ each time the output signal is produced by the sensor, to calculate ~~calculates~~ a new ~~fresh~~ air concentration value as the sum of (i) a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal and (ii) the product of an ~~[[the]]~~ air concentration value previously stored in said memory and a weighting factor less than one, to store ~~stores~~ said ~~fresh~~ new air concentration value in said memory in place of ~~[[a]]~~ the previously stored air concentration value, to compare ~~compares~~ said new air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ an alarm signal if the new air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said new air concentration value; and

an alarm adapted to receive said alarm signal and operate when said new air concentration value has exceeded said predetermined value.

30. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor associated with the fluid conduit to detect air in the fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and provide at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said conduit at a sampling time within the respective interval;

~~means for receiving the output signals and for calculating therefrom an air concentration value and for triggering remedial action when the air concentration value exceeds a predetermined value, comprising:~~

a memory adapted to store an ~~for storing the~~ air concentration value;

a processor adapted to receive the output signal and ~~which~~, each time the output signal is produced by the sensor, to calculate ~~calculates~~ a new ~~fresh~~ air concentration value as the sum of (i) a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal and (ii) the product of the air concentration value previously stored in said memory and a weighting factor less than one, to store ~~stores~~ said new fresh air concentration value in said memory in place of ~~[[a]]~~ the previously stored air concentration value, to compare ~~compares~~ said new air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ a control signal if the new air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said new air concentration value; and

a fluid control device adapted to receive said control signal and stop delivery of fluid along the fluid conduit when said new air concentration value exceeds said predetermined value.

31. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

~~means, including a memory,~~ for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information as to the time when the output signal was produced ~~since the output signal was produced;~~

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates,~~ for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory,~~ a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the longer the time which has elapsed since the corresponding sensor output signal was produced, to calculate ~~calculates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ an alarm signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

an alarm adapted to receive said alarm signal and operate when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

32. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

~~means, including a memory,~~ for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information as to the total volume of fluid dispensed through said conduit since that output signal was produced;

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates,~~ for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory,~~ a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the longer the time which has elapsed since the corresponding sensor output signal was produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare

~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ an alarm signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

an alarm adapted to receive said alarm signal and operate when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

33. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

means, ~~including a memory~~, for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information at least as to the place of the output signal in the chronological sequence of such output signals;

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates~~, for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory~~, a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the longer the time which has elapsed since the corresponding sensor output signal was produced, to calculate ~~calculates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ an alarm signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

an alarm adapted to receive said alarm signal and operate when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

34. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

~~means, including a memory,~~ for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information as to the time when the output signal was produced ~~since the output signal was produced;~~

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates,~~ for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory,~~ a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the larger the amount of fluid which has flowed through said conduit since the corresponding sensor output signal was produced, to calculate ~~calculates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ an alarm signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

an alarm adapted to receive said alarm signal and operate when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

35. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

means, ~~including a memory~~, for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information as to the total volume of fluid dispensed through said conduit since that output signal was produced;

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates~~, for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory~~, a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the larger the amount of fluid which has flowed through said conduit since the corresponding sensor output signal was produced, to calculate ~~calculates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ an alarm signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

an alarm adapted to receive said alarm signal and operate when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

36. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

means, ~~including a memory~~, for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information at least as to the place of the output signal in the chronological sequence of such output signals;

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates~~, for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory~~, a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the larger the amount of fluid which has flowed through said conduit since the corresponding sensor output

signal was produced, to calculate ~~ealeulates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ an alarm signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

an alarm adapted to receive said alarm signal and operate when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

37. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

~~means, including a memory,~~ for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information as to the time when the output signal was produced ~~since the output signal was produced~~;

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~ealeulates~~, for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory~~, a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the longer the time which has elapsed since the corresponding sensor output signal was produced, to calculate ~~ealeulates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ a control signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

a fluid control device adapted to receive said control signal and stop delivery of fluid along the fluid conduit when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

38. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

~~means, including a memory,~~ for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information as to the total volume of fluid dispensed through said conduit since that output signal was produced;

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates,~~ for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory,~~ a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the longer the time which has elapsed since the corresponding sensor output signal was produced, to calculate ~~calculates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ a control signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

a fluid control device adapted to receive said control signal and stop delivery of fluid along said fluid conduit when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

39. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

~~means, including a memory,~~ for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information at least as to the place of the output signal in the chronological sequence of such output signals;

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates,~~ for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory,~~ a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the longer the time which has elapsed since the corresponding sensor output signal was produced, to calculate ~~calculates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ a control signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

a fluid control device adapted to receive said control signal and stop delivery of fluid along the fluid conduit when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

40. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

~~means, including a memory,~~ for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information as to the time when the output signal was produced ~~since the output signal was produced;~~

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates,~~ for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory,~~ a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the larger the amount of fluid which has flowed through said conduit since the corresponding sensor output

signal was produced, to calculate ~~ealeulates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ a control signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

a fluid control device adapted to receive said control signal and stop delivery of fluid along the fluid conduit when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

41. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

means, ~~including a memory~~, for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information as to the total volume of fluid dispensed through said conduit since that output signal was produced;

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~ealeulates~~, for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory~~, a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the larger the amount of fluid which has flowed through said conduit since the corresponding sensor output signal was produced, to calculate ~~ealeulates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ a control signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

a fluid control device adapted to receive said control signal and stop delivery of fluid along the fluid conduit when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

42. (Currently amended) Apparatus for use in conjunction with a medical fluid infusion system for assessing the hazard to a patient connected to such infusion system of air in infusion fluid delivered along a fluid conduit of such system, the apparatus comprising:

a sensor adapted to detect air in fluid passing along the fluid conduit of such infusion system and providing at time intervals output signals, each output signal corresponding to the amount of air in a predetermined section of said fluid conduit at a sampling time within the respective time interval;

~~means, including a memory,~~ for deriving and storing at least for a length of time encompassing a plurality of such time intervals, for each output signal, a raw value corresponding to the magnitude of the output signal, and for storing associated information at least as to the place of the output signal in the chronological sequence of such output signals;

a processor which, each time the output signal is produced, is adapted to calculate ~~calculates,~~ for each of the raw values stored ~~in said memory,~~ a respective weighted value equal to the product of the respective raw value and a weighting factor which is smaller the larger the amount of fluid which has flowed through said conduit since the corresponding sensor output signal was produced, to calculate ~~calculates~~ an air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values, to compare ~~compares~~ said air concentration value with a predetermined value, and to provide ~~provides~~ a control signal if the air concentration value calculated exceeds said predetermined value;

a display connected with the processor for displaying said air concentration value;
and

a fluid control device adapted to receive said control signal and stop delivery of fluid along the fluid conduit when said air concentration value calculated has exceeded said predetermined value.

43. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as in any one of claims 31-42, wherein the processor is arranged to calculate a primary air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values for a relatively long sequence of such output signals ending with the most recent and is arranged to calculate a secondary air concentration value as the sum of said weighted values for a relatively short sequence of such output signals ending with the most recent, or as the sum of said raw values for a relatively short sequence of such output signals ending with the most recent, and wherein the apparatus includes means arranged for comparing ~~to compare~~ said primary air concentration value with a first predetermined threshold and means arranged for comparing ~~to compare~~ said secondary air concentration value with a second predetermined threshold and for operating ~~to operate~~ an alarm and for terminating ~~terminate~~ the supply of fluid along said conduit if either the primary air concentration value exceeds said first predetermined threshold or said secondary air concentration value exceeds said second predetermined threshold.